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ABSTRACT

The Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) has provided data to inform curriculum and instruction in Maine's schools for 16 years. The test results, student questionnaire data, and associated professional development opportunities have had a major impact on improving instruction, particularly in English language arts (ELA). In 1997 the legislature approved the Maine Learning Results--standards in eight content areas which form the framework for curriculum in Maine. Now that the MEA has been aligned with "Learning Results," the resulting data on student achievement can be used more comprehensively to plan classroom, school, and district improvement strategies. Students in grades 4, 8, and 11 in all public schools in the state participate in the MEA. The ELA section consists of a reading, writing, and a reading/writing segment, in which students respond to multiple choice, short answer, and constructed response questions related to reading passages. They also complete a writing sample based on a common prompt. Teachers score the writing prompt and evaluate the writing samples. State consultants provide regional workshops to review what was received and how to read the information. Includes sample data. (NKA)

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Using Data to Inform Instruction - Stories from Five States: "Maine", the Way Life Should Be.

by Karen Rumery

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CS 217 422

Using Data to Inform Instruction – Stories from five States

Maine, the Way Life Should Be

Karen Rumery, Maine DOE

The Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) has provided data to inform curriculum and instruction in Maine's schools for sixteen years. The test results, student questionnaire data, and associated professional development opportunities have had a major impact in improving instruction, particularly in English Language Arts.

In July of 1997, the state legislature approved the Maine Learning Results. These standards, in eight content areas, form the framework for curriculum in Maine. The legislation also stipulated that the Maine Educational Assessment continue and be aligned with the learning results. **Maine is entering the third year of the "neo-MEA", aligned with Maine's Learning Results. We continue to provide professional development opportunities focused on informing curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the classroom.**

Now that the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) has been aligned with *Learning Results* , the resulting data on student achievement can be used more comprehensively – along with data generated at the local level – to plan classroom, school, and district improvement strategies. Our goal is to create an organizational culture that values accountability grounded in data analysis, and to provide this community with assistance and opportunity to develop common language and assessments through shared events regionally.

Students in grades 4, 8, and 11 in all public schools in the state participate in the MEA. It is administered in 2-sessions: Fall (ELA and Health and Physical Education); Spring (Math, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts).

ELA consists of a reading, writing, and a reading/writing segment. Students respond to multiple choice, short answer, and constructed response questions related to reading passages. In addition, they complete a writing sample based on a common prompt and a reading/writing sample based on a passage and scored for both reading and writing.

Maine teachers score the common writing prompt at each grade level in state. It is this professional development opportunity that has significantly influenced the improvement in writing for the state. Teachers from throughout the state come together for 3-days to not only evaluate student

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writing samples, but to network with colleagues and examine the work of students from many settings and groupings. The question of what is good writing and how good is good enough is debated and determined through benchmarking activities using a scoring rubric and live student papers.

Teachers completing surveys at recent scoring sessions indicate that the experience with MEA scoring is an assist for them in the classroom and within their schools and districts. When asked what described their initial motivation to attend a scoring session, the majority replied that improving classroom assessment was their primary reason.

Teachers have continued the learning from these scoring sessions within their own schools and districts. Schools throughout the state adopt the scoring rubric and students understand what they need to do to improve their writing.

With the revised MEA the results are not simply numbers, but actual student work is returned to districts to enhance the understanding of why a particular score was earned.

Building on the success of the in state scoring of writing, Maine completed a sample scoring of student constructed responses in reading, science and technology and physical education, social studies, math, health, and visual and performing arts. Although we have not been able to continue this work at present, we are hopeful that teacher scoring will become the rule for more than ELA's writing segment.

Students, teachers, and principals complete questionnaires related to the overall assessment as well as specific items related to content. These provide interesting findings that influence curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

While all districts and schools are provided with complete reports for their schools and classrooms, the question of what this information is really telling schools is another professional development opportunity for teachers and administrators. The state consultants provide regional workshops to review what was received and how to read the information. These sessions encourage classroom teachers, schools, and districts to mine the information received and to use it to inform their own assessments and curriculum planning. Schools receive a CD containing all student common writing samples. Schools are also provided with sets of released common items from the MEA.

Schools in Maine are truly becoming "excited about data". Maine schools and school districts are responsible for creating local comprehensive assessment systems to align with the Maine Learning Results. The MEA,

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although a small part of the overall system, has a track record that is helping to provide evidence and opportunity for teachers and districts throughout the state.

With sincere apologies to fellow panel members and audience, I hope the contents of this handout will provide adequate information to peak your curiosity and encourage you to learn more about "data madness" in Maine. Seriously, we have been and continue to engage teachers, schools and districts in conversations and activities around assessment to inform teaching and learning. Our state assessment, the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA), is but one piece of a developing Comprehensive Assessment System.

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Additional information:

- ✓ sample released items
- ✓ sample school/district report
- ✓ sample class report
- ✓ sample questionnaire items
- ✓ sample findings from analysis

Released items and connections:

The released items are from the grade 4 ELA reading section –
The items correspond to the class report as numbers 10 – 14. The classroom teacher can determine how each individual did on an item as well as the whole class, school, and district view. Using the released items, the teacher can determine which content standards and performance indicators were assessed and whether they were addressed in class. Implications for teaching and learning begin to unfold.

The school/district report places the school in relationship to other schools in the district as well as the state. Performance levels are based on the body of work, but the breakdown of standards within a content area indicates the distribution of points within that area. Thus the example of ELA shows standards A and C reported together and B and D reported separately.

The questionnaire is a sampling of the types of questions asked to arrive at the sampling of findings from analysis. This is statewide data, but provides good information to provoke questions and research.

THE FASTEST KID IN THE FIFTH GRADE

(from *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson)

At the bang Jess shot forward. It felt good—even the rough ground against the bottom of his worn sneakers. He was pumping good. He could almost smell Gary Fulcher's surprise at his improvement. The crowd was noisier than they'd been during the other heats. Maybe they were all noticing. He wanted to look back and see where the others were, but he resisted the temptation. It would seem conceited to look back. He concentrated on the line ahead. It was nearing with every step. "Oh, Miss Bessie, if you could see me now."

He felt it before he saw it. Someone was moving up. He automatically pumped harder. Then the shape was there in his sideways vision. Then suddenly pulling ahead. He forced himself now. His breath was choking him, and the sweat was in his eyes. But he saw the figure anyhow. The faded cutoffs crossed the line a full three feet ahead of him.

Leslie turned to face him with a wide smile on her tanned face. He stumbled and without a word began half walking, half trotting over to the starting line. This was the day he was going to be champion—the best runner of the fourth and fifth grades, and he hadn't even won his heat. There was no cheering at either end of the field. The rest of the boys seemed as stunned as he. The teasing would come later, he felt sure, but at least for the moment none of them were talking.

10. Who is the main character in this passage?

- ○ A. Jess
- ○ B. Gary Fulcher
- ○ C. Miss Bessie
- ○ D. Leslie

11. The term "sideways vision" means seeing

- ○ A. out of the corners of your eyes.
- ○ B. when you turn your head to the side.
- ○ C. objects in black and white.
- ○ D. the sides of people's faces.

12. Jess is the kind of person who

- ○ A. is afraid.
- ○ B. wants to win.
- ○ C. is always happy.
- ○ D. wants to be mean.

13. In the second paragraph the author refers to Leslie as "someone." Name two other ways the author refers to Leslie in the second paragraph.

13. _____

_____

_____

_____

14. Describe how Jess's feelings about the race change from the beginning of the race to the end. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

14.

13. In the second paragraph the author refers to Leslie as "someone." Name two other ways the author refers to Leslie in the second paragraph.

SA#: 13
Learning Results: A-5
Process of Reading
A Students will use the skills and strategies of the reading process to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate what they have read. Students will be able to
5 read a variety of narrative and informational texts independently and fluently.

THE FASTEST KID IN THE FIFTH GRADE
SHORT-ANSWER SCORING GUIDE

Score	Description
2	Response correctly identifies two other ways the author refers to Leslie in the second paragraph (i.e., it, the shape, the figure, the faded cutoffs).
1	Response correctly identifies one other way the author refers to Leslie in the second paragraph.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response.

14. Describe how Jess's feelings about the race change from the beginning of the race to the end. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

CR#: 14
Learning Results: B-10
Literature and Culture
B Students will use reading, listening, and viewing strategies to experience, understand, and appreciate literature and culture. Students will be able to
10 apply effective strategies to the reading and interpretation of fiction (e.g., fantasies, fables, myths, mysteries, realistic and historical fiction, adventures, and humorous tales) that is appropriately complex in terms of character, plot, theme, and dialogue and appropriately sophisticated in style, point of view, and use of literary devices.

THE FASTEST KID IN THE FIFTH GRADE
CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE SCORING GUIDE

Score	Description
4	Response demonstrates an insightful understanding of the character's feelings and includes strong support from the text.
3	Response demonstrates an understanding of the character's feelings. Textual support may lack some specificity or development.
2	Response demonstrates a partial understanding of the character's feelings with incomplete support from the text.
1	Response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the character's feelings with vague support from the text.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response.

Training Notes for Constructed-Response #14

Score	Description
4	Response provides a thorough description of how Jess's feelings change from the beginning to the end of the race (see below). Explanation is well-supported by details in the passage.
3	Response provides an adequate description of how Jess's feelings change from the beginning of the race to the end, but lacks some supporting details.
2	Response provides a partial description with support or provides a weak description of the change of his feelings.
1	Response provides a vague statement about the race.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response.

Thorough description may include (but not necessarily be limited to) the following details

Paragraph 1 At the beginning of the race Jess felt confident/good.

Paragraph 2 At the middle of the race Jess became concerned/worried/nervous.

Paragraph 3 At the end of the race Jess felt defeated/humiliated/upset/stunned.

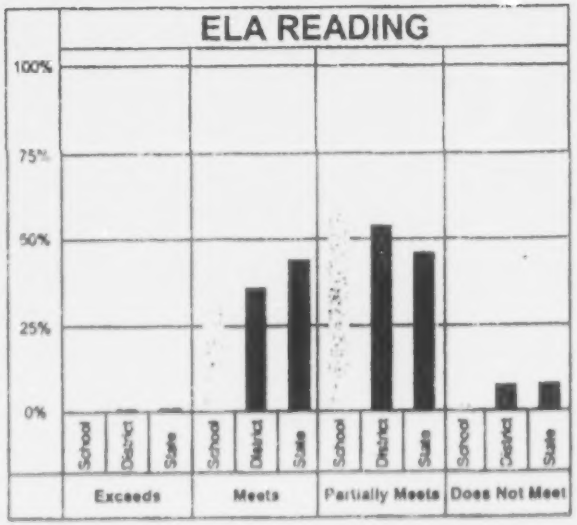
A score point 1 should be reserved for those responses that are brief and show no awareness at all of a change in Jess's feelings. If responses convey an awareness of the change in feelings, they may receive more than a 1 even if there is a reliance on retelling.

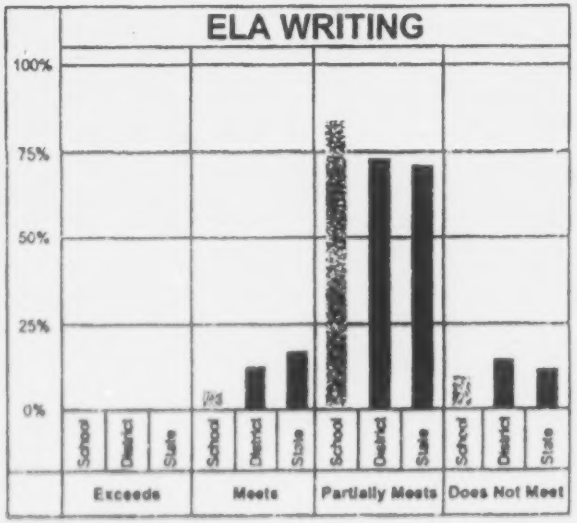
SUMMARY OF SCORES

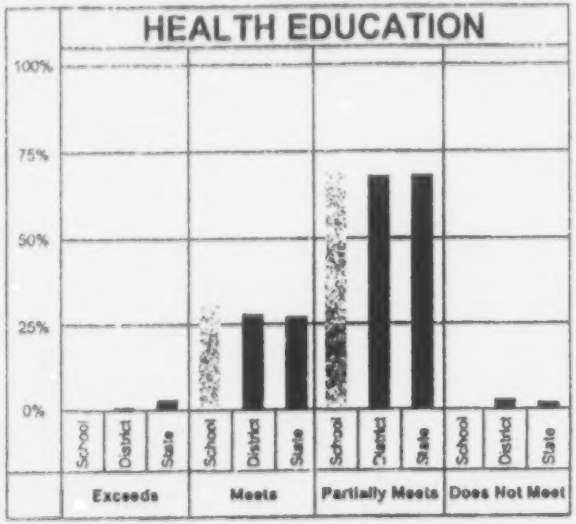
District:
Grade: 4
Date: December 1999

Executive Summary of School, District, and State Scores

Year	Average Performance Score		
	School	District	State
ELA READING			
1998-1999	539	539	539
1999-2000	537	537	539
2000-2001			
Cum. Avg.	538	538	539
ELA WRITING			
1998-1999	528	530	530
1999-2000	531	531	532
2000-2001			
Cum. Avg.	529	530	531
HEALTH EDUCATION			
1998-1999	540	540	539
1999-2000	539	538	539
2000-2001			
Cum. Avg.	540	539	539







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ELA READING RESULTS

School:
District:
Grade: 4
Date: December 1999

PERFORMANCE LEVELS		STUDENTS AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
		School		District		State
		N	%	N	%	%
Exceeds the Standards - The quality of a student's work at this level of proficiency exceeds the standards of performance as identified for Maine's *Learning Results* in English language arts (reading). The work demonstrates exemplary accomplishment in the comprehension of literary and informational texts, in the use of the skills and strategies of reading to answer questions, and in the demonstration of understanding of how words and images communicate. Scaled scores (561-580).	1998-1999	1	2	3	1	1
	1999-2000	1	2	2	1	1
	2000-2001					
	Cumulative Average	1	2	3	1	1
Meets the Standards - The quality of a student's work at this level of proficiency meets the standards of performance as identified for Maine's *Learning Results* in English language arts (reading). The work demonstrates a consistent accomplishment in the comprehension of literary and informational texts, in the use of the skills and strategies of reading to answer questions, and in the demonstration of understanding of how words and images communicate. Scaled scores (541-560).	1998-1999	27	52	113	52	48
	1999-2000	15	31	71	36	44
	2000-2001					
	Cumulative Average	21	42	92	44	46
Partially Meets the Standards - The quality of a student's work at this level of proficiency partially meets the standards of performance as identified for Maine's *Learning Results* in English language arts (reading). The work demonstrates inconsistent accomplishment in the comprehension of literary and informational texts, in the use of the skills and strategies of reading to answer questions, and in the demonstration of understanding of how words and images communicate. Scaled scores (521-540).	1998-1999	19	37	86	39	43
	1999-2000	32	65	106	54	46
	2000-2001					
	Cumulative Average	26	51	96	47	45
Does Not Meet the Standards - The quality of a student's work at this level of proficiency does not meet the standards of performance as identified for Maine's *Learning Results* in English language arts (reading). The student demonstrates limited accomplishment in the comprehension of literary and informational texts, in the use of the skills and strategies of reading to answer questions, and in the demonstration of understanding of how words and images communicate. Scaled scores (501-520).	1998-1999	5	10	17	8	8
	1999-2000	1	2	16	8	8
	2000-2001					
	Cumulative Average	3	6	17	8	8

Learning Results Content Standards	Number of Points Possible	Average Points Attained (Number and Percent)					
		School		District		State	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Reading Process and Language (Standards A and C)	54	31.7	59	29.5	55	31.0	57
Reading Comprehension (Standards B and D)	162	87.6	54	80.1	54	93.2	58
Literature & Culture (Standard B)	88	45.5	52	47.5	54	49.4	56
Informational Texts (Standard D)	74	42.1	57	40.7	55	43.8	59

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Common Item Class Report

ELA READING

GRADE 4

Code:
District:
School:
Class:
Date: December 1999
Group Size: 23 Page: 1 OF 1

Name	Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	Points Earned (49 Max. Points)	Scaled Score	Performance Level
	Item Type	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	SA	SA	CR	MC	MC	MC	SA	CR	MC	MC	MC	SA	CR	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	SA	ER			
	Correct MC Response	D	B	C	A	D	A				A	A	B			C	B	D			C	A	B	C	B	D					
	Total Possible Points	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	8			
THOMAS		+	C	B	B	C	+	2	0	1	+	B	C	0	1	D	A		1	2	D	+	C	+	+	B	1	4	18	526	P
JESSICA	A	+	+	+	D	C	C	0	1	3	+	+	+	0	1	D	+	+	1	1	D	+	+	B	+	+	0	1	20	530	P
TYLER	C	+	A	+	+	B	D	1	1	1	+	+	+	0	0	A	A	C	1	1	D	B	C	B	A	B	0	5	16	522	P
RACHEL	E	+	+	+	+	+	D	0	2	3	+	+	+	2	2	A	A	+	2	2	+	+	C	+	+	B	1	3	30	546	M
CAROLINE	M	+	+	+	+	+	C	2	0	3	+	+	+	2	2	+	+	+	2	3	+	+	+	+	+	+	1	4	36	556	M
DARRYLANN		+	+	+	+	+	+	2	2	2	+	+	+	2	2	+	+	+	2	0	A	+	+	+	+	+	1	4	34	552	M
THOMAS	C	+	+	+	+	+	+	2	0	1	+	+	+	2	3	+	+	+	1	2	+	B	+	+	+	+	1	4	33	552	M
MISTY	D	+	+	+	B	+	+	0	0	2	+	+	C	0	1	B	+		1	1	D	+	+	+	+	+	0	5	23	536	P
MATTHEW		+	+	+	B	+	C	0	2	1	B	D	+	0	1	D	A	C	0	2	D	B	C	A	C	+	0	2	14	518	D
MATT	S	+	D	D	C	A	+	0	0	0	B	+	+	0	1	A	A	C	0	1	D	+	+	B	+	+	1	3	14	518	D
TIFFANY	R	+	+	+	B	+	D	1	0	2	+	+	+	0	1	+	+	+	2	2	+	+	+	+	+	A	1	4	28	544	M
ANDY	G	+	+	+	+	C	B	1	2	2	+	+	+	0	1	+	+	+	2	3	D	D	+	+	A	B	0	5	28	544	M
ALICIA	N							B	B	B				B	B				B	B							B	B	NT		
RYAN	A	+	C	+	B	A	D	0	0	2	D	+	+	0	0	+	+	A	0	2	+	+	+	+	+	+	1	4	21	532	P
BRIAN	T	B	+	D	D	+	C	B	1	1	+	B	+	B	B	D		C	1	B	A	C	C	+	+	A	2	2	13	516	D
SHANNON	M	+	A	+	+	B	B	2	0	3	+	+	+	1	1	+	+	+	2	1	D	+	+	+	A	+	0	5	28	544	M
KATIE	J	+	A	+	+	+	+	2	1	2	+	+	+	0	2	+	A	+	2	2	D	B	+	A	+	B	1	4	28	544	M
ELIZABETH	G	+	+	+	+	+	D	2	2	3	+	+	+	0	1	B	+	C	2	1	D	+	+	+	+	+	1	3	29	546	M
GERMAINE	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	1	1	+	+	+	0	2	+	+	+	2	1	+	+	+	+	+	C	1	4	29	546	M
JULIE	A	+	C	+	C	+	D	0	0	2	+	+	+	2	1	+	+	+	2	1	A	B	D	+	A	A	1	2	21	532	P
TYLER	T	+	D	+	+	B	D	2	1	2	D	+	+	1	1	A	+	+	1	2	+	+	+	+	+	A	1	3	26	540	P
JOEL	T	+	+	+	+	+	+	2	2	3	+	+	+	2	0	+	+	+	1	1	+	+	+	+	+	B	0	4	32	550	M
CHRIS	D	+	+	D	+	B	+	0	1	2	B	+	+	0	1	D	+	B	1	1	+	+	C	+	+	A	0	3	20	530	P

Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Percent Correct/Avg. Score: Class	95	64	82	59	59	41	1.0	0.9	1.9	77	86	91	0.6	1.1	50	68	59	1.3	1.5	41	68	68	77	77	45	0.7	3.5
Percent Correct/Avg. Score: School	94	63	72	52	66	51	1.1	0.8	1.9	85	79	85	0.7	1.4	54	78	70	1.1	1.4	45	60	57	79	76	45	0.6	3.2
Percent Correct/Avg. Score: District	95	77	79	57	73	55	1.2	0.9	2.2	85	81	87	0.9	1.6	64	84	76	1.3	1.7	53	71	65	76	78	44	0.7	3.7
Percent Correct/Avg. Score: State	95	70	75	57	70	45	1.0	0.9	2.0	90	74	84	0.8	1.5	58	76	75	1.2	1.6	54	65	59	67	73	59	0.6	3.3

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ELA READING RESULTS

(CONTINUED)

School:
District:
Grade: 4
Date: December 1999

Reporting Categories	School					State				
	% Students in Each Category	% Exceeds the Standards	% Meets the Standards	% Partially Meets the Standards	% Does Not Meet the Standards	% Students in Each Category	% Exceeds the Standards	% Meets the Standards	% Partially Meets the Standards	% Does Not Meet the Standards
GENDER										
boy	63	0	32	68	0	50	1	39	50	10
girl	37	6	28	61	6	50	2	49	43	6
GRADE FIRST ATTENDED SCHOOL IN DISTRICT										
kindergarten	65	0	31	66	3	68	2	47	45	7
first or second grade	18	0	22	78	0	14	1	41	49	9
third grade	12	17	50	33	0	8	1	40	50	9
fourth grade						10	1	34	52	12
TITLE 1 PROGRAM										
students currently served in reading	12	0	17	67	17	11	0	15	65	19
students previously served in reading	53	0	23	73	4	21	0	24	63	14
MIGRANT										
students eligible, not served						0	0	38	62	0
students eligible, served, not tutored						1	0	29	57	14
students eligible, served, tutored						1	0	27	52	21
STATE-APPROVED GIFTED/ TALENTED PROGRAM										
yes						5	8	83	8	1
no	100	2	31	65	2	95	1	42	48	9
ENGLISH LANGUAGE FLUENCY										
monolingual English						98	1	44	46	8
bilingual/English fluent						1	2	40	52	6
bilingual/limited-English proficient						0	0	24	59	18
IDENTIFIED DISABILITY										
yes						10	0	14	54	32
no	92	2	29	67	2	90	2	47	46	6
OPTIONAL SCHOOL/DISTRICT QUESTION										
A										
B										
C										
D										
E										

Questionnaire Items	Sch.	State				
	% Students in Each Category	% Students in Each Category	% Exceeds the Standards	% Meets the Standards	% Partially Meets the Standards	% Does Not Meet the Standards
How many pages do you read each day in school and to complete homework assignments?						
five or fewer pages	41	24	0	34	53	13
six to ten pages	43	26	1	42	49	7
eleven or more pages	16	51	2	50	42	6
Do the questions on this MEA test reflect what you have learned in school about reading?						
Yes, the questions match the reading classes.	29	30	1	42	48	9
They match somewhat.	49	45	2	51	42	5
They matched just a little.	14	18	1	39	51	10
There was no match.	8	7	1	27	54	18
How many books have you read at home in the past two months?						
none	2	4	0	25	57	18
one	4	8	1	34	54	11
two to four	22	33	1	45	47	6
five or more	71	56	2	46	44	8
How often do you search for and read information on a computer?						
never	14	22	1	33	54	12
once or twice a year	18	21	2	53	39	5
once or twice a month	45	25	2	47	45	7
once a week	22	32	1	44	47	8
How often do you do reading assignments or take tests where you earn points for what you have written even if your answer is not completely correct?						
never	6	8	1	40	47	12
once or twice a year	13	10	1	42	47	9
once or twice a month	58	34	1	47	45	6
once a week	23	48	1	43	47	9
"In school I learn most of what I need to know to answer the MEA reading questions."						
It is true about me.	59	58	2	50	42	6
It is not true about me.	8	5	1	40	45	14
I am not sure.	33	38	0	35	53	11
How good are you at reading?						
I am better than most students in my class.	24	26	4	64	29	3
I am as good as most students in my class.	55	59	1	42	50	7
I am not as good as most students in my class.	20	14	0	15	62	23
How difficult were the reading sessions of the MEA test for you?						
very difficult	4	3	0	17	51	32
difficult	4	10	1	35	52	12
a little difficult	65	58	1	46	46	7
not at all difficult	27	29	2	46	45	7

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A Sampling of interesting findings from the Analysis of the 1999-2000 school year results of the MEA:

ELA – reading and writing

- ✓ 89% of grade 4 students report having read two or more books at home in the two months prior to testing.
- ✓ 56% of grade 4 students report having read 5 or more books at home in the two months prior to testing. These students are more likely to Meet or Exceed standards (48% compared to 35% for those who only read one book).
- ✓ 51% of grade 4 students report reading 11 or more pages daily of in-school or homework assignments. These students are more likely to Meet or Exceed standards in reading than students who read fewer pages (52% compared to 34% of students reading 5 or fewer pages).
- ✓ 75% of grade 11 students report using a computer to search for and read information once a week or more. These students are more likely to Meet or Exceed standards in reading (50% compared to 23% of students who never use a computer search).
- ✓ 94% of grade 11 students report using a computer to produce the final draft of written assignments.
- ✓ 49% of grade 11 students report receiving grammar instruction primarily through written comments on their papers. These students are more likely to Meet or Exceed standards in writing than those receiving other types of instruction (39% of students compared to 31% or fewer in other modes of instruction, such as mini-lessons, grammar textbooks, and individual instruction during writing conferences)
- ✓ 36% of grade 8 students report keeping a collection of their writing and using it to grow as a writer. These students are more likely to Meet or Exceed standards in writing (36% compared to 16% of students not keeping a collection of their writing).